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# The Bloomfield Record.

Devoted to the Interests of Bloomfield, the Oranges, Glen Ridge, Montclair, and the various Suburban Districts of Essex County.

VOL. XVII. NO. 15.

BLOOMFIELD, N. J., FRIDAY MAY 28, 1897.

PRICE THREE CENTS

## ABOUT TAXES.

There's the question of taxation. And it's a twister. The assessors are around hunting up property, trying to fix values that a falling market has rendered unstable and low. Fact is, this tax question always suggests another question: What is anarchy?—i. e., in its common acceptance. Some would answer, "A defiance of the law." If so, then what would exemplify this definition more than the universal and wholesale disregard of the tax law, which is as plain as A B C?

It says that the real and actual value of all real and personal property shall be assessed. That it is not done goes without saying. Why not?

Throughout the State there is, and so far as I can ascertain, always, has been a conspiracy to undervalue. In one town two-thirds of the actual value is taken, in another one-half, in another two-fifths, and so on.

When the assessor takes his oath to assess property according to the law he knows down in his heart that it will be impossible for him to comply with it. I have much respect for that man—I think he hailed from Bloomfield—who, after his election, refused to take the oath and then break it. Other and more pliable consciences filled his place.

Since nothing occurs without a reason, ample reason abounds for this singular miscarriage of justice. It lies in the effort of every taxing district to get out of paying its honest share of county taxes. A mere question of one township or city beating the other townships or cities within the county. Why, so long has this trick been worked that should an assessor of Bloomfield township assess property at the true and actual value according to law, he would run great risk of being mobbed at home after making such report to the county board.

In one tax district in the city of Orange last year Assessor Holmes raised the total valuations nearly one and a quarter millions. This he did evidently to get nigger to the letter of the law. It brought down upon his head a wrathful community, first, because other parts of the city were valued much lower; again, because the city had to pay a greater pro rata tax to the county; and again because certain holders of unimproved real estate were taxed much heavier than usual.

Many holders of small properties who went before the Commissioners of Appeals in Orange, asking for reduction, stated that if all properties in the county were valued proportionately they would not then care if the valuation were doubled. It was the discrimination only that they based their plea upon. That a lower tax would result under proper assessment, was the consensus of opinion.

I think it was in Port Jervis, N. Y., where some few years ago a single-taxer was elected assessor upon a platform to assess actual values. The result was that those who owned fine residences were assessed three or four times the usual amount. The business portion of the community were assessed proportionately on their buildings. The owners of vacant lots (usually assessed as farm property) did not escape under the plea "that the lots paid no income." The result was that the holders of small properties and the farmers had but little tax to pay—the burden falling upon the wealth, rather than the industry of the community. The tax rate was about half what it usually had been. "The gang"—composed of some wealthier citizens—did not allow that assessor to be re-elected the following year.

Now, I don't feel like hatcheling the assessors. The trouble is farther up. It is a matter of State importance. The law is all right as it stands. It only needs supplementing with an adequate penalty for not assessing correctly. The law should direct each property owner to make out a schedule of valuation of his property, real and personal, subject to revision by a commission, which should be the commissioners of appeals with extended powers. Furthermore, it should stipulate that every estate while passing through the Probate Court should be subject to retrospective relative to previous tax assessments. Thus, since no one knows exactly when he will die, he will be careful to issue a correct statement to the commissioners rather than that his estate shall pay taxes and fines after he is gone. This is the Swiss method of collecting income tax. It works like a charm.

## GO OVER THE BOOKS.

Finally, it would be edifying, if a copy could be made of the assessments when finished and "the real and actual values" extended, so that each citizen and reader of THE RECORD could judge for himself as to the advantages accruing from a compliance with the law. This action THE RECORD promises to discuss further.

Referendum Vote in Glen Ridge. Pursuant to a resolution of the Council of Glen Ridge, dated May 3, 1897, the question of an issue of sixty thousand dollars in bonds by said Borough will be submitted to a referendum vote of the citizens on June 25th, prox.

These bonds are to be issued for the purpose of borrowing money, which money is to be used for the purpose of "refortifying, macadamizing, curbing," etc. etc.

Why Glen Ridge, which has a valid bill of taxation against every property owner, should bond itself to anything or anyone and then pay interest to boot in order to get a few thousand dollars in money, is not easily understood. Money can't build a street or set a curb. It can only hire other people to do it for what profit there is in it. Now, if Glen Ridge has a lot of taxpayers in debt to the Borough, or soon liable to be, what is easier or more sensible than to issue Borough warrants of small denominations redeemable in taxes and pay these out for labor to build such improvements as are needed? In this way the interest charge is saved and the indebtedness controlled at home. If labor were scarce and difficult to get there might be a shadow of excuse in "placing under bonds" a whole community.

In another column will be found reprinted this week the historical narrative of the building of the Guernsey Market House. Its methods can be operated in Glen Ridge. Read it.

The Coming Issue. Governor Black of New York has recorded himself as an advocate of restricted suffrage, contending that the ingrafting into our citizenship of foreign population is calamitous. When we recall that the States which gave their electoral votes to Mr. McKinley, the foreign element predominates and in those States which went to Mr. Bryan, the Yankees predominate almost to a dot, Governor Black's pronouncement is interesting, at least.

Mark these words! Neither the money nor the tariff questions will cut much of a figure in the campaign of 1900. The first gun has been fired by Governor Black. Around a broader or a narrower suffrage declaration, the political giants will fight. Shall the champions of monarchical or the champions of Jeffersonian principles prevail? Referendum or no Referendum? Shall the people rule or the politicians? Great will be the conflict. A re-adjustment of political lines more startling than ever.

## LATEST RECORDS.

Governor Griggs has vetoed the bill giving Mayors of second-class cities of less than 30,000 power to appoint eight School Commissioners in place of those elected. The Orange Board of Education will, therefore, stand as at present.—Orange Chronicle.

Governor Griggs can do well by curbing legislation for localities. Consistent with his purpose as first expressed in his inaugural address, he could "decrease the number of laws" by letting the local governments settle things that pertain only to themselves. Whether Orange has eight or twenty School Commissioners ought to be settled by Orange only, and Trenton should attend to its own business. It would have enough to do.

The reduction in the tax levy this year of nearly \$30,000 from that of 1896, will, doubtless, prove a pleasing bit of news for Montclair's taxpayers.—Montclair Herald.

Now, if Montclair had only been wise, like Bloomfield, and had spent that amount of money for lawyers in a foolish fight, its taxpayers would have had the sweet satisfaction of lavishly supporting that detestable fraternity of "public servants who get you in a hole and leave you there for what money there is in it," beside meeting an additional tax levy of corresponding munificence.

"In the name of the Prophet—Figs!" Why will quiddities of the press make statements like the following which are directly opposed to the facts?

The act establishing the referendum and the initiative passed by the Nebraska legislature is criticised adversely by all but the Populists. The act is confined to cities and towns and is liable to great abuse, certainly involving much expense, and prone to keep the people constantly in hot water, welcome only to the professional agitator. The new law had been made more restricted in

its operation there might have been a different feeling about it. But that 5 per cent of the citizens shall have the power of having any ordinance submitted to the vote of the general body of the community goes too far, and the liability is that Swiss experience will be repeated in Nebraska; namely, that apathy and indifference will throw the decision into the hands of those voting against the ordinance submitted. This has been the surprising and unfortunate observation of Switzerland, where the initiative and referendum are applied with the view of eliciting popular expression upon matters of importance.—Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph, (Ind.)

The population of the Canton of Berne in 1888 was 536,679, giving about 107,000 voters, and in 1896 there were 60,000 votes cast in a referendum vote by which proportional representation was defeated by 3000. Does this look like apathy? Many such instances might be given.

Just listen to this and weep:  
From the Boston Traveler, (Rep.)

The promises of the St. Louis platform are laughed to scorn. A man from the west, the representative of the western money kings, is against the wish of the President, forced into his cabinet. Regardless of the views of the President, this man from Chicago proclaims war against the greenback from the start, and declares for a currency to be issued by the national banks.

What are we to expect? Where will they land us next? Can the contraction of the currency go on much further without bringing on us a still greater quota of misery and trouble? We believe not.

It is hard for us to prophesy evil, but we must warn the Republican leaders that they must do something toward injecting a new spirit into their policy. The people are not looking forward to protection with any great degree of hope. The agriculturists of the country are more and more against it. One part of the country will not stand forever the idea of being robbed that another section may become prosperous. It is easy to deprecate the division of the masses and the classes, but this cry will not down. Banker's greed, it is the disturbing element at every political feast in the land. Today there is a spirit of unrest all over the United States. It began on the plains of the far west, but now its cry for relief meets with an echoing response from every city and hamlet. We hope and pray that Mr. McKinley will see the situation as it really exists before it is too late, and that he will shake aside these men who, if they are given the chance, will pull down the Republican party into one great ruin.

What more can be said?  
To paint the lily:  
To gild refined gold:  
To add another perfume to the violet:  
To hope where there is no hope, or to ask the Major for what his party will not give—  
"Is wasteful and ridiculous excess."

We have spent money to put sewers under the ground, sidewalks and curbs give a hard regularity to our streets, but nothing has been done to beautify and adorn our borough.—Rutherford News.

Looks like Rutherford stands in line with Bloomfield. But one thing occurs worth the consideration of both places. How can improvements be conscientiously advocated until the tax rate, already too high, is measurably lowered? Again, why not own the electric lighting and other public facilities and turn the dividends received back into the pockets of the tax-paying people? I believe this is the way out.

The Legislature of this State will meet in special session next Tuesday to correct a clerical error in the wording of an act which will prohibit gambling and make horse racing impossible under the constitution of the State. The error may seem like a trifling matter, but its correction is fully merited by the beneficial results to be expected from it.—Montclair Times.

Let her wave!—That extra session. It was a good thing that someone could make a mistake so that an extra session might be called when most needed to settle some very important (?) party matters. If some one could only make another mistake so as to prevent the Legislature from meeting again for the next five years, guess we should have less law, less taxes, less millionaires and less machine politics.

The New York Sun, which is right in most things, has got the weak end in its discussion of the question of municipal government.—Orange Chronicle.

The "32" end as usual. Well! Well! With the Sun as your educator, Brother Baldwin, all cherished hopes fall to the ground. Instead of being useful to your day and generation by warning the people that "if they see it in the Sun it isn't so," you boldly accuse of being "right" that caller of names and reviler of "stuffed prophets." Alas! Alas!

Broken stone will cost the village only \$1.40 per ton during this year. Has there been a falling out among the dealers in this article?—So. Orange Bulletin.

Guess the syndicate's busted. But then competition is "the life of"—or, rather, "the price of broken stone," and broken hearts, and crippled children, and blasted lives, and wrecked fortunes. The Syndicate is all right, that is, if it is owned by South Orange and not by individuals. If it crushed out competition and gave the laborer the full product of his labor, it would be a God-send.

## RESIGN!

TO FIRE CHIEF ACKERMAN.  
The people of Bloomfield bear you no malice, but for reasons obvious to all your resignation as Chief of the Fire Department to which you were recently appointed has been requested. A protestation such as has been made on your resignation in open meeting by citizens of Bloomfield is almost without parallel. It was a temperate and reasonable request. In the name of the people THE RECORD calls upon you to resign forthwith, assuring you that no citizen can long afford to defy public opinion.

These Firemen elect their own Chief. The election for heads of the Dover Fire Department occurred on Monday evening. The polls opened at 7 and closed at 9, in the rear hall of the engine house. The total number of votes cast was 118 of which two were rejected. James Welch received 100 votes and was chosen chief of the department.—Morris Journal.

No machine! Further comment unnecessary.

Men are being discharged every day in this age of deferred prosperity. Stomachs have to be fed just the same. There are about four millions of people out of work with relative stomachic capacity. Now, just what these unfortunate "labor financiers" are going to do is a serious question. Perhaps they are going to think. But look out! When one's stomach begins "to think" it is a serious affair ultimately. Never mind, there are jails enough to hold hungry law-breakers.

A local paper came out last Saturday dressed up in an old speech made by Ex-Secretary Carlisle—the dissipated gold-policy interpreter of a June administration—and it did look ridiculous, for a fact. The gold policy playing bondholders and agitators are kindly furnishing "gold argument plate matter" free to those publishers who will knuckle, and Carlisle's speech in this paper looked mighty like as though the people who read it were being fooled. Funny, isn't it?

"Who runs Bloomfield?" I have been asked this several times. It seems to be a conundrum. All agree that "the people who pay the taxes" don't. It ought to be known definitely. Any person answering this question satisfactorily will receive a year's subscription to THE RECORD. No names will be divulged. Let those try who know.

Where theoretically the people rule in public affairs there is no adequate reason why they should not also be practically effective. "What's nobody's business ought to be everybody's business" in matters of public character—Bloomfield, as elsewhere.

"Until all liberty is lost!" Don't you hear it echo? "Until all liberty is lost!" These were Abe Lincoln's prophetic words respecting the rule of Mammon in America. Wonderful prophecy! "Until all liberty is lost!" A question of time only, brethren, I fear.

Congressman Chas. N. Fowler of New Jersey has sent THE RECORD a copy of his monetary speech delivered Wednesday, March 31, '97. Anyone can get it by addressing Mr. Fowler. A short review of the argument will be found in next issue.

The "confidence game" is a shrewd play. It tickles the fancy until there is no confidence left and some one else gets the money. A return of confidence begins when the thief returns the money.

The people get used to being ruled but after awhile it becomes a little irksome, particularly after they wake up and find their powers taken from them. Oh Vigilance!

How long can a public official ignore public opinion? Someone please answer this.

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## L. A. W. Notes.

Application blanks for membership in the L. A. W., may be obtained from Arthur Kitchell, Local Council, Bloomfield Post Office.

The New Jersey Division reactor, for it now has, for the first time in its history, 5,101 members, by the addition of 250 this week, and is only exceeded by New York and Pennsylvania in the number of applications. Now such recruiting, secure the banks issued by our division and hand one to each of your unattached friends. Application blanks at this office.

Membership, May 22, 1897. League of American Wheelmen: New Jersey, total 7,062; New Jersey Division, new, 250; total 5,101.

Reports regarding the condition of the Livingston Mills and the number of animals secured are very gratifying. All roads on the 31st will lead in that direction. The cyclist who wants more than is offered him on Monday next, in the way of race meets, road races or club runs, must be hard to suit, for he should be able to pick out what he individually wishes. At the same time it is well to remember that an L. A. W. ticket will be a good thing to have with you on that day.

Local councils would do a good service if they would keep their police authorities informed of all rewards offered for the recovery of wheels stolen from L. A. W. members.

The fact that the League of American Wheelmen will hold its annual meet at Patuxent this year should help to increase the membership in this State. The first week in August promises to be a gala occasion for wheelmen in every sense of the word, and this event will unquestionably be the greatest gathering of the kind on record. As the entertainment will be solely for members of the organization, an early application for membership is desirable. To become entitled it is necessary to have the endorsement of two members of the organization and to pay an initiation fee and one year's dues, amounting to \$2. Full information regarding the league and its advantages may be secured upon application to the secretary, Livingston Mills, and blanks can be secured at this office.

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Take CASCARAT. Candy Cathartic, 10c or 25c. If C. C. C. fail to cure, a refund is made.

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Patty's cod liver oil, half-pint bottle, 25c.

Hot chocolate, coffee, ginger or lemon, 5c. a drink;  
hot clam broth or beef tee,  
10c. a drink.

At those prices you can get these drinks most anywhere. But if the best prepared are wanted—those containing nothing but healthful ingredients, take your drink at Patty's. Your friends will tell you the same—if you ask them.

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Storm Serges, in heavy and black only, splendid weight, measuring full 50 inches in width, fine wire twist, our regular 50c quality, per yard per yard.  
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Grenadines—Black Mohair and Wool, all Wool and Silk Mixed Grenadines, in stripes, figures and lace effects, an exclusive selection to choose from, worth \$1.25 to \$1.50 yard, at yard.

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